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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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INFORMATION PAPER ON

CONFORMAL FUEL TANKS (CFT) FOR THE F-15

I. System Data:

A. System: Conformal Fuel Tank (CFT) for the F-15 aircraft.

B. Description: CFTs are streamlined fuel tanks which nest along the sides of the F-15 in the wing-root area, conforming to the shape of the fuselage. The CFTs have a total fuel capacity of approximately 9,750 pounds (1,500 gallons of JP-4 jet fuel) per ship-set (two CFTs, one for each side). CFTs would increase the range of the F-15 by varying amounts (70 to 80 percent, on the average), depending upon the aircraft mission and the altitude flown. The CFTs retain the capability to mount and fire four AIM-7 SPARROW air-to-air missiles (two on each tank) similar to the fuselage installation. In addition, the CFTs have been designed with an optional air-to-surface store station on each tank which may be used in lieu of the AIM-7 missiles. This gives the aircraft five air-to-surface stations with CFTs installed, all capable of various single and multiple store loadings. However, electrical and control changes to the standard F-15C/D aircraft would be required to use the CFT air-to-surface stations.

C. Availability: Not in series production for the U.S. Air Force. However, initial production CFTs (10 ship-sets) are being produced under a joint McDonnell Aircraft (McAir)/Israeli Aircraft Industries (IAI) commercial arrangement, where McAir does the major fabrication and all subcomponent procurement, while IAI does some minor manufacturing and final assembly. Deliveries to the Israeli Air Force began in January 1981 at the rate of one ship-set per month.

(1) US Deployment Date: N/A

(2) US Initial Operational Capability Date: N/A

(3) US Quantity on Hand: 1 ship-set (2 CFTs)

(4) Production Availability: 36-40 months

(5) Commercial Availability: Yes

(6) Estimated Unit Cost: $800,000 (does not include spares, support, etc.)

D. Policy Considerations:

(1) Classification/NDP Exceptions: Unclassified, no exception required.

(2) 36(b) Notification Required: Yes. Case value estimated at $75M (includes all program costs).

II. Estimated Saudi Utilization:

A. Purpose: Increases range and/or mission loiter-time of Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) F-15s in order to improve the ability of the RSAF to carry out air superiority and combat air patrol missions over the entire Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

B. Anticipated Deployment Locations: RSAF F-15 main operating locations: King Abdul Aziz Air Base (Dhahran), Prince Fahad Air Base (Taif), and King Khalid Air Base (Khamis Mushayt).

C. Quantity Required: 70 ship-sets (140 CFTs) (US estimate).

D. Estimated Additional Manpower Requirements: None

E. Estimated Additional Training Requirements: No significant requirement.